


February 6, 2005

# **Freedom Watch**

Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan



***Cav crews beat  
adversity, keep  
Kiowas flying  
Page 8***

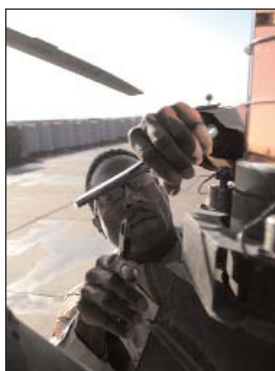


Air Force Staff Sgt. Jennifer Lindsey

## Final flight

1st Lt. Bryan Jandorf (left), 81st Expeditionary Fighter Squadron A-10 Thunderbolt II pilot, "congratulates" Col. John Allison, 455th Expeditionary Operations Group, on his successful final flight. The commander respectfully called "Coach" made his last pass in an A-10 over the Afghan sky last month, while achieving the record for the most A-10 flying hours in the Air Force.

## Contents



Sgt. Timothy Mallory, aviation intermediate maintenance support, attaches safety wire to a component on an OH-58D Kiowa Warrior Helicopter at Shindand Airfield in Herat Province. Constant service is one way the Kiowa has remained in operation in the austere conditions of Afghanistan.

See cover story Page 8  
Sgt. Frank Magni

**Page 3:** Reserve chief reenlists OEF Soldiers during visit to Afghanistan

**Page 4:** DDR work trailer speeds up weapons refitting

**Page 5:** Sharana PRT Soldiers assess remote village, aid Afghans

**Page 6:** CMA reaches out to Tagab, medically treats men, women and children

**Page 7:** Interpreters help "America's Battalion" Marines communicate



**Page 9:** Marines face anti-Coalition militants twice in two days

**Page 10:** Infantry scouts work with ANP to improve security near Garzak

**Page 12:** Ammunition technicians keep A-10s stocked with ordnance to use against enemies

**Page 13:** Safeguarding the Coalition: Fire safety is everyone's responsibility

**Page 14:** Army MPs work checkpoints with Afghan National Police in Ghazni



## Freedom Watch

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## Reserve chief reenlists Soldiers throughout Afghanistan

Story by Spc. Chris Stump  
17th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — “I am an American Soldier, and I’m terribly proud to wear that title,” began the Chief of the Army Reserve during a reenlistment ceremony Jan. 22 on Bagram Airfield where he reenlisted and promoted a handful of his Soldiers.

“Take great pride in what you are doing,” said Lt. Gen. James R. Helmly, who also serves as the commanding general, U.S. Army Reserve Command.

“Your country is asking a lot of you right now. I can’t tell you it’s going to be easy, because it’s not. Uphold the Constitution and go where your country tells you,” he added before he pinned rank on four of the Soldiers gathered and had the others raise their right hands and take the oath of enlistment one more time.

Serving with and for Soldiers is what Helmly values in his position. And having the opportunity to see them make a commitment to stay in is something he greatly appreciates.

“It’s about service to you,” he said of his job as the senior official in the Army Reserve. “You are being promoted to leadership positions. Leading is about service to those you lead, not yourself.

“Rank comes with deep and enduring responsibilities,” he added.

Newly promoted Staff Sgt. Shawn Ryall was one leader the general was speaking about — someone committed to the Army and its people.

“I always knew I was going to be in the military for a career,” said the 221st Ordnance Company noncommissioned officer.



Spc. Chris Stump

“I’m glad I got the chance to be promoted and reenlisted by the general of the Reserves, but I’m also glad I got the chance to do it in front of everyone I’ve served with,” he said.

“I’ve become brothers with the people here. It’s nice to have them here to see me make the commitment.”

It’s a commitment many don’t appreciate, both in and out of uniform, he said.

“A lot of people don’t understand what serving is all about. For me, it’s about serving my country and my Soldiers,” said Ryall.

The commitment is also about doing what fulfills oneself, the reason many Reservists sign on for one more term.

“I enjoy what I do in the Reserves as a civil affairs sergeant,” said Sgt. Melinda Dozier, 450th Civil Affairs Battalion.

Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen

**Above: Lt. Gen. James R. Helmly, Chief of the U.S. Army Reserve (right), reenlists Staff Sgt. Darryn Dunn (center left), 556th Personnel Support Battalion, and Sgt. Joshua Nelson, 367th Eng. Bn., atop “Radar Hill” at FOB Salerno Jan. 23.**

**Left: Helmly shakes Sgt. Melinda Dozier’s hand after she and 14 other Soldiers reenlisted on Bagram Airfield Jan. 22. Dozier is a member of the 450th CA Bn.**

“I get to work directly with the Afghan people. I enjoy being able to see the effect we have on the people here,” she said.

Having the oath administered by the chief was just an added bonus for someone who was already getting what she really wanted — a chance to keep serving the way she was.

“The Soldiers like what they are doing, and they’re not afraid to sign on to do it again,” said Sgt. Maj. Scott White, Army Reserve Affairs senior enlisted advisor.

“Most of the reenlistees come to us,” he said. “They have positive responses, they love what they are doing and they are willing to stay on, even with the possibility of doing it again.”

A point Helmly made even before pinning staff sergeant stripes on Ryall, or asking Dozier to raise her right hand and swear the oath of enlistment.

“Keep doing what you’ve been doing,” he said. “Just as Soldiers have for 229 years before you.”

Helmly traveled to several forward operating bases to administer the oath of reenlistment to other Reserve component Soldiers during his three-day visit to Afghanistan.



# New trailer facilitates DDR, speeds up small arms repair

Story and photos by  
Sgt. 1st Class Darren Heusel  
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration program is at the forefront of providing for a more secure and stable future for all Afghans.

Now, with the recent unveiling of a new DDR work trailer, small arms experts with Afghanistan's New Beginnings Program will be able to work in any type of weather to help speed up the process.

"This marks an historical event for DDR," said Chief Warrant Officer Steve Gerald, a logistics planner with the Office of Military Cooperation — Afghanistan Defense Resources Sector. "This is a great benefit for us working out here on site, especially having been working out in the elements for all this time."

The ANBP DDR program, which is partially funded by the International Observers Group and supported by the United Nations, allows militia forces in Afghanistan to turn in their weapons and receive, in return, a new life of service within mainstream society.

The new work trailer, located at Pol-e-Charki on the outskirts of Kabul, will provide small arms DDR representatives a better working environment at the ANBP site.

Before the arrival of the new 40- by 8-foot working trailer, also referred to as "The Boom Boom Room," Afghan Ministry of Defense personnel worked

on flat tables in an outside area, exposed to a variety of weather conditions.

If the weather was too extreme, DDR operations were suspended for an indefinite period of time.

The new, modernized work trailer, complete with insulated paneling, work tables, lights, parts bins, electrical connectivity, heating and air conditioning, will allow additional weapons to be pushed to the National Supply Depot in Kabul and into the hands of the ANA.

The new trailer also has a separate 11 kilowatt generator to power the unit. It is fully transportable by air or truck, and can be set up in any remote region in Afghanistan for DDR operations.

The DDR process began in October 2003 in Konduz, with operations at Pol-e-Charki beginning in September 2004, said Gerald.

"Since that time, we've been working in this environment and in these conditions, so we hope this will make the working conditions a lot easier," he said.

Of the weapons turned in throughout the country, the small and medium weapons are handed over to the small arms handlers at Pol-e-Charki for inspection and to determine whether they are serviceable, said Gerald.

The weapons that are serviceable are then taken to the supply depot in Kabul. Small arms experts with the 76th Separate Infantry Brigade further inspect, and if necessary, complete minor repairs of the weapons.

The weapons are then delivered to the various ANA kandaks (battalions) stationed throughout the four regions of the country.

"The Afghan government has given us 12 good workers, and I wanted to establish a comfortable environment for them to work in," said Sgt. Maj. David Tindall, a co-worker of Gerald's who is credited with coming up with



**An Afghan man dismantles a PKM machine gun in the new Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration work trailer in Pol-e-Charki. The DDR process encourages local militias to turn in weapons and reintegrate into society.**

the idea for the new trailer.

"What we have is the culmination of a month's worth of planning and execution to see this project to fruition," he said.

Staff Sgt. Robert Taylor, a member of Company B, 113th Support Battalion, who heads up the team of five small arms handlers at the depot in Kabul, said his crew will go through up to 1,300 weapons a week.

"A soldier is nothing without a weapon and, honestly, I want them to be able to stand on their own," he said.

With the new \$18,610 work trailer already paying dividends, talks of another are underway.

Ahmad Massood, a 19-year-old ANBP worker who goes to high school part-time and earns \$40 a month working 40 hours a week on the DDR program, is just one of the dozen workers who is grateful for the new trailer.

"We're very happy to have this section assisting us with this container to make our jobs easier," he said. "It's very difficult to work in extreme weather and I just hope I can do more for my country."



**Afghanistan's New Beginnings Program workers unload a weapons cache on the outskirts of Kabul during DDR operations.**

# Civil affairs Soldiers blaze new trails

Story and photo by  
Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen  
Combined Task Force Thunder Public Affairs

BORLAK, Afghanistan — The phrase “remote Afghan village” is nearly as redundant as “frozen tundra.” Many villages here are so far off the beaten path it takes a global positioning system and some serious map work to get to them.

Which often means that the most difficult part of helping some of the remote villages is locating them.

Soldiers from the Sharana Provincial Reconstruction Team traveled to Borlak village in central Paktika province to assess it for future assistance.

After a three-hour convoy across the snow-covered plains of central Paktika, they arrived at the village of about 1,500 people.

While Soldiers handed out toys and humanitarian aid to the villagers, Sgt. James Atkins and Sgt. David Coffey, both of the 450th Civil Affairs Battalion, met with village elders to discuss the village's needs.

The PRT has a standard procedure for village assessments, said Atkins, a civil affairs specialist with the PRT. Among the things they ask about are population, what villagers do for a living, the water situation, schools and if they have health clinics in the village.

“It's all a part of reconstruction,” he said.

“If they don't have something, we get with the governor and ask him to put it on his list to build.”

Many villages have the same problems, and water is the biggest issue throughout the province.

“The initial stage of any reconstruction is, you go around to as many villages as you can and get that assessment to find out exactly where the province is as far as water, health and schools,” said Atkins.

Among those handing out humanitarian assistance was Sgt. Melinda Dozier, another civil affairs specialist with the PRT. Dozier played a somewhat different role in the village.

She was the only female Soldier on the mission and her role was basically to interact with Afghan girls, since Afghan culture prohibits male Soldiers from talking to them.

In the northern provinces, women leave the house more and don't have to cover up as much, said Dozier. She has a feeling things will eventually change that way here, it just might take a bit longer.

“I wish the girls were able to experience more in life, but I realize that's many, many years in the making, and I can't exactly



**Sgt. James Atkins, a civil affairs specialist from the Sharana PRT, listens to village elders during a village assessment Jan. 6 in Borlak.**

change it overnight,” she said.

Dozier plays an important role on these types of missions, said Atkins.

“It's a benefit to have a female on the team, because as men, we can't approach any of the women in the village, and she can,” he said.

Regardless of the role they played at the village, both Atkins and Dozier know they are making a difference in the lives of Afghans.

“In other jobs, you're playing a part in the big picture,” said Atkins. “But you don't really get to see the effect it has. We actually do get to go out and see the effect it has on the people.”

## Enduring Voices

*What is your favorite Super Bowl tradition?*



**Pfc. Jason Behel**  
LTF 725  
*“Getting together with a bunch of friends to watch the game.”*



**Jonathan York**  
Aviation Missile Command  
*“I watch the Super Bowl every year. I get together with family when I can.”*



**Sgt. Darian Wood**  
1st Bn., 211th Avn. Rgt.  
*“Sit at home with some buddies and order pizza.”*



**Air Force Senior Airman Mary Kizzee**  
455th AEW  
*“Spending time with friends.”*



# CMA team identifies medical needs in Tagab

Story and photo by  
Sgt. Stephanie L. Carl  
17th Public Affairs Detachment

**TAGAB DISTRICT,** Afghanistan — Often incapacitated by diseases like polio, smallpox and tetanus, many Afghans are unable to receive treatment for their ailments.

During a cooperative medical assistance to four different villages in eastern Afghanistan's Tagab district Jan. 6-7, members of the Parwan Provincial Reconstruction Team brought treatment to the Afghans, alleviating some of their pain and suffering.

"We're trying to have an immediate impact during these missions," said Sgt. 1st Class Lance Berlovich, Parwan PRT medical non-commissioned officer in charge.

Throughout the two-day mission, Berlovich, along with Republic of Korea Capt. Ryu, Jeho, surgeon, treated patients



**ROK Capt. Ryu, Jeho, a surgeon with Parwan PRT, listens while an Afghan woman describes her problem during a CMA in eastern Afghanistan's Tagab district.**

for a variety of conditions.

"We've treated various skin conditions, high blood pressure and arthritis, among other things," said Berlovich.

Unfortunately, the medical professionals are only able to do so much to help the Afghans.

"We're limited in what we can provide," said Ryu. "We can only bring so many sup-

plies with us. One of the biggest problems they have here is that there aren't enough vaccinations."

Identifying these types of problems is one of the reasons the medical professionals conduct CMAs.

"We're identifying the medical needs of Afghans throughout the country," said Berlovich.

The team also offers guidance to the Afghans and provides insight to the national government as the medical infrastructure is developed.

And to provide more extensive care to their patients, the staff also writes referrals for the more serious patients to receive treatment at Bagram Airfield.

"What we have with us is very limited," said Ryu. "When we can't do enough to help them here, we write a referral for them to come to Bagram for treatment."

Whether they are providing guidance and medication, or affording the opportunity for more extensive treatment, the group finds great fulfillment in their mission.

"My whole military career has been centered on treating Soldiers," said Berlovich. "Being able to use my experience to deliver care to Afghans who are in need has probably been the most rewarding experience I've had."

## Religious Services Around the CJOA

### Kabul

#### Sunday

0630 - Christian Worship Service  
1030 - Christian Worship Service (U.S. Embassy Marine Lounge)  
1430 - Christian Worship Service  
1530 - Small Group Study 301  
1600 - Small Group Study 201

#### Tuesday

1530 - Small Group Study 301

#### Wednesday

1430 - Small Group Study 401

#### Friday

0830 - Latter-Day Saints  
1330 - Small Group Study 101  
1430 - Coffee House Ministry

#### Saturday

1130 - Catholic Mass

**\* All times  
Zulu/GMT**

### Camp Phoenix

#### Sunday

0430 - Catholic (Italian)  
0530 - Non-Denominational Prot.  
1330 - Catholic (French)  
1530 - Non-Denominational Prot.

#### Tuesday

1430 - Bible Study

#### Wednesday

1430 - Gospel Bible Study

#### Saturday

1430 - Gospel Worship Service

### FOB Salerno

#### Sunday

0300 - Foundations Bible Class  
0400 - Traditional Prot. Worship  
0530 - Catholic Mass  
0730 - Latter-Day Saints  
0830 - Gospel Service  
1400 - Inspirational Movie Night

#### Saturday

1500 - Contemporary Prot.

### Bagram Airfield

#### Sunday

0400 - Liturgical Prot.  
0530 - Roman Catholic Mass  
0830 - Latter-Day Saints  
0700 - Traditional Prot.  
1115 - Korean Language Prot.  
1300 - Gospel Service

#### Monday

1400 - Gospel Choir Rehearsal

#### Tuesday

1400 - Gospel Bible Study  
1545 - Prot. Music Rehearsal

#### Wednesday

1600 - Catholic Music Rehearsal

#### Thursday

1430 - Gospel Choir Rehearsal

#### Friday

1430 - Jewish Prayer  
1500 - Women's Bible Study

#### Saturday

0500 - Seventh-Day Adventist  
1330 - Korean Choir Rehearsal  
1515 - Roman Catholic Mass  
1630 - Prot. Choir Rehearsal  
**Daily, Monday-Friday**  
0700 - Roman Catholic Mass  
0745 - Noon-Day prayer

### Kandahar Airfield

#### Sunday

0430 - Catholic Mass  
0500 - Bible Study (325th FSB)  
0630 - Prot. Worship  
1330 - Gospel Choir Practice  
1400 - Sunday School  
1530 - Gospel Service

#### Monday

1300 - Gospel Choir Practice

#### Tuesday

1430 - Purpose-driven Life Study  
1300 - Gospel Choir Practice  
1430 - Praise Team Practice  
1530 - Bible Study

#### Wednesday

1300 - Gospel Choir Practice  
1430 - Praise Team Practice  
1530 - Prot. Worship

#### Thursday

1430 - Praise Team Practice  
1500 - Latter-Day Saints

#### Friday

0830 - Islamic Prayers  
1330 - Jewish Sabbath Prayers

#### Saturday

0400 - Men's Breakfast  
1300 - Catholic Mass  
1430 - Praise Team Practice

#### Daily, Monday-Friday

0330 - Catholic Mass

# One voice: *Interpreters aid America's Battalion, provide essential communications*

Story and photo by  
Marine Cpl. Rich Mattingly  
3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment

KONAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan — The author Rollo May once said, "Communication leads to community, understanding and mutual valuing."

In eastern Afghanistan, where mutual understanding and communication between cultures varies, the Marines of 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, are bridging the lingual and cultural barriers between Afghans and Marines with a new breed of "warrior-interpreters."

Using skilled interpreters embedded with platoons, the Marines have been able to increase the effectiveness of their work with the Afghan National Army. They have also dramatically expanded their ability to locate and close with the enemy in many areas where Afghans might otherwise be hesitant to cooperate with Marines for fear of repercussions from anti-Coalition militants.

Wadeer, an interpreter with the Afghan Security Forces operating side-by-side with the Marines of "America's Battalion," was just finishing his medical school studies when the Taliban took power six years ago.

"I was two weeks away from finding out the results of my final medical school exams when everything changed," said the soft-spoken man who is now as comfortable wielding an AK-



**Marine Sgt. Shawn Kelly, Co. I, 3rd Bn., 3rd Marines, squad leader, speaks with Wadeer, an interpreter working for America's Battalion, about a weapon his squad found in a house in Korangal Valley. Interpreters are the "lifeblood" of the battalion's current mission according to Marines operating in Konar province.**

47 assault rifle as he is a stethoscope. Before he could find out the results of his tests, the Taliban had overthrown Jalalabad where he was in school.

"The Taliban didn't care about education," said Wadeer.

"I was thrown out of class by a Taliban-approved professor, because I did not cut my hair a certain way," continued the interpreter in disgust.

Wadeer is fluent in both English and Pashto, the language primarily used in the Marines' area of responsibility. With two years of medical practice added to his experience and ability to communicate, Wadeer brings a lot to the fight.

With his and the other interpreters' help, Marines are gaining more ground

**See Interpreter, Page 15**

## PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD

Navy Lt. David Gribben, Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan Defense Resources Sector Medical Team, observes as an Afghan National Army soldier properly searches a vehicle for potential bombs or contraband outside the International Security Assistance Force German Hospital in Kabul. Gribben coordinated the joint security training for the hospital security guards. The training included basic tactics for the guards and orientation to operational concerns.

*Photo by OMC-A Defense Resources Sector*

If you have high quality photos of service members supporting the Coalition mission or enjoying well-deserved off-duty time, please e-mail them to [stumpc@baf.afgn.army.mil](mailto:stumpc@baf.afgn.army.mil). Please include full identification and caption information, including who is in the photo and what action is taking place.





# ‘Hear the choppers hovering’

## Mechanics keep Kiowas flying, beating tough Afghan conditions

Story and photos by Sgt. Frank Magni  
17th Public Affairs Detachment

SHINDAND AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — As the first unit to employ the OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopter in Afghanistan’s austere environment, 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, face many challenges to achieve mission success.

The high altitude and harsh weather of the country make safely operating the Kiowa an achievable challenge.

With the Cav close to the end of their deployment, the unit’s Kiowas have logged more than 3,000 flight hours on a variety of missions in Regional Command’s south and west.

“There are many people throughout Army aviation who still don’t believe these birds are flying over here,” said Chief Warrant Officer Mike Hopkins, Troop C, 3rd Sqdn., 4th Cav. Rgt., instructor pilot.

For the unit, the recipe for success in Afghanistan primarily rests with the crews who work long hours maintaining the aircraft and coming up with innovative ways to improve their performance, said Hopkins.



**Crew chiefs of Trp. B, 3rd Sqdn., 4th Cav. Rgt., move an OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopter into position for maintenance.**

Initially working from Kandahar Airfield, the crew’s immediate challenges were to develop working maintenance routines and strip weight from the aircraft to improve performance.

“The first three months we learned the most,” said Sgt. Kyle Emmer, Trp. B, 3rd Sqdn., 4th Cav. Rgt., crew chief. “We pulled 12- to 16-hour days keeping these aircraft in the air.”

Emmer and the crew chiefs knew they could improve the aircraft’s performance by making it as light as possible.

“It was a process of elimination for us,” said Emmer. “We were constantly pulling certain boxes out and putting others back in.”

Weight conservation was so important, that every single pound got them one step closer to their goal, said Emmer.

*See **Kiowa**, Page 15*



**Above: Pfc. Pablo Zuniga-Ortiz (left) and Sgt. Kyle Emmer, both of Trp. B, 3rd Sqdn., 4th Cav. Rgt., perform scheduled preventive maintenance checks and services on a Kiowa at Shindand Airfield. Left: Emmer reattaches a cover on the airframe of a Kiowa after performing a scheduled PMCS.**



# Marines face, repel enemy twice in as many days

Story and photos by  
Marine Cpl. Rich Mattingly  
3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment

KONAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan — Marines and Sailors of Company I, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, had some close calls when they made contact with enemy forces in the Korangal Valley twice in a 48-hour period.

Coming immediately after a mission where Co. I had been pursuing anti-Coalition militants, the Marines and Sailors of “America’s Battalion” came under small-arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire in the middle of the night in the valley.

“It started during a watch change-over, so most of us were awake,” said Navy Seaman Jonathon Seaux, hospital corpsman with Co. I.

“I checked on my Marines to make sure everyone was OK, and then I just did the first thing I thought to do — pick up the squad automatic weapon next to me and start firing back.”

Seaux didn’t even notice the 7.62 mm round that lodged in his body armor just above his heart until the next day.

“I guess I’m just lucky,” said Seaux, proudly displaying the small arms protective insert plate with a hole from which he had extracted a round.

After taking fire for a solid 20 minutes, the Marines sent the enemy packing for

the night with deadly accurate 60 mm high-explosive mortar rounds.

With one squad running low on ammunition after the firefight, another squad in the valley made a night movement of over 1,200 meters to ensure their fellow Marines had back-up.

“They didn’t complain and they didn’t stop,” said Marine 2nd Lt. Pete Ankney, platoon commander with Co. I. “They knew they had a job to do.”

The next day, the company’s combined anti-armor team went to retrieve the Marines who were maintaining an over watch position in the valley. After extracting the Marines, they got their own taste of action in an ambush by heavily-armed enemies using fortified fighting positions.

“We heard muted gunfire, RPGs exploding and the sound of rounds hitting the trucks,” said Marine Cpl. Josh Burgbacher, Co. I machine gunner.

“That lasted for maybe half of a second and then you could hear every single gun in the convoy open up. Everyone just reacted with their training.”

Other Marines said Burgbacher, a machine gunner, calmly helped fix a jammed MK-19 automatic grenade launcher while rounds were impacting around him.

The ambush was a well-planned attack, according to the CAAT Platoon Commander, Marine 1st Lt. Jonathan Frangakis. He said the enemy had a pile



**Navy Seaman Jonathon Seaux, a hospital corpsman with Co. I, 3rd Bn., 3rd Marines, clutches his SAPI plate. The plate protected the Sailor, stopping a 7.62 mm round during a firefight.**

of rocks marking the start of the kill zone.

“We thought at first it was an improvised explosive device, but they knew how many vehicles we had, and as soon as the first vehicle got near the marker, they opened up on us,” he said.

For several Marines, it was their second firefight in just a few hours.

“I heard the rounds impacting,” said Marine Lance Cpl. Daniel Alfieri, Co. I machine gunner. “I just thought, ‘Here we go again,’ ” he recalled as he cleaned his weapon after returning to Forward Operating Base Asadabad with his squad.

The Marines assaulted through to the village where much of the fire had originated. They confirmed two enemies killed.

Another close call to complement Seaux’s included the shot-through front site post of Marine Sgt. Jason Burch’s M-16A4 rifle. Burch said he didn’t even notice the damage to his rifle as he continued to return fire on the enemy’s position.

As dawn broke in the morning, the Marines and Sailors joined together in giving thanks for their good fortune that no one was seriously injured in the fire-fights. The Marines returned to FOB Asadabad where, to the man, the Marines broke out cleaning gear and busted the carbon off of their weapons before considering the mission complete.



**Marine Sgt. Jason Burch, Co. I, 3rd Bn., 3rd Marines, displays his M-16A4, with a damaged front sight post after being hit with small arms fire during an ambush.**



A scout team from HHC, 2nd Bn., 35th Inf. Rgt., exits a CH-47 Chinook in Garzak. The team was there to work with the local police and help them further develop as a force.

## Infantry scouts help Afghan police improve

Story and photo by Sgt. Jennifer S. Emmons  
17th Public Affairs Detachment

GARZAK DISTRICT, Afghanistan — High in the mountains of Zabul province, a small team of Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, jumped off a CH-47 Chinook helicopter into the deep snow.

The scout team came to the district to work with the newly established police force, providing security for the people in the region.

"We are seeing how the police are doing and if they need anything," said Spc. Michael Campanale, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Bn., 35th Inf. Rgt., scout.

The infantrymen are working with the police to ensure they have all they need to be successful in their mission of security.

"They need to be reaching out to local villages and expanding security to the outlying areas," said Staff Sgt. Matthew Clarke, HHC scout team leader.

Presence patrols to the villages outside the immediate area of the police compound are essential to security.

"The population must trust their police," said Clarke. "The more the people see the police working for them, the more confident they are in their own security. Then they are more willing to turn in (anti-Coalition militants). If they know they are protected from hostile action, they will work more closely with the government."

The Soldiers assessed the progress the police made since their last visit.

"We make sure they are doing what they said they would," said

Clarke. "We tell them what they are doing well and how they can improve in certain areas. We give them advice on how to handle certain situations."

This kind of hands-on visit occurs every few months.

"Coalition presence in the area helps the police provide security," said Campanale. "When we show up, the people know the police are working with us, and that makes them feel better about their police force."

"Our presence legitimizes the police to the villagers," said Clarke. "It makes the police's job easier, because the people know they are there to help."

A stable police force will allow the villages to grow and flourish, thanks to the help provided by the Coalition.

And the police appreciate the Coalition's assistance.

"We like when the Soldiers come," said Abdul Hassan, Khak Afghan chief of police. "They always come here to help. We work together to make this a safe place."

Assisting in Afghanistan

becoming a self-reliant country is a goal of the scouts.

"We are here to improve the infrastructure and help the police provide security," said Clarke. "We give them things that help them do their job easier."

While in the district, the team issued police identification cards with each police officer's picture. They also provided cold weather gear to the police so they can better operate in the snowy environment.

"We are trying to help them do the best job they possibly can, so they can provide security on their own," said Campanale.

A goal of the Afghan police that is seen as a success, said Clarke. "Things are running smoothly out here," he said. "I'm sure the police are just going to get better with time."

*"The more the people see the police working for them, the more confident they are in their own security."*



# Lagman Soldiers purify base's water

Story and photo by Spc. Dijon Rolle  
17th Public Affairs Detachment

**FIREBASE LAGMAN, Afghanistan** — Having an adequate supply of water is something often taken for granted. Whether it's for drinking, bathing or cleaning, water is a vital resource that is impossible to live without.

One that Soldiers from the 325th Forward Support Battalion's water purification team at Firebase Lagman ensure is always available.

The three-man team is responsible for purifying thousands of gallons of water for troops living and working at the firebase.

"The demand for water is critical, and being able to supply the Soldiers with the amount they need, when they need it, is also critical," said Staff Sgt. Joseph Washington, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 325th FSB, water purification noncommissioned officer in charge.

Washington leads the team from Kandahar Airfield responsible for turning local well water into a potable supply for troops at Lagman.

"When we got here, they didn't have a water site. The Soldiers had to rely on local well water and bottled water from Kandahar," said Spc. Elisa Sannella, HHC, 325th FSB, water purification specialist.

The team has only been at Lagman for a short period of time, but has still managed to set up all their equipment and supplies,



**Sgt. Michael Konetsky, water purification team, checks a line on the ROWPU purification system at Firebase Lagman.**

including the reverse osmosis water purification unit, or ROWPU. The \$800,000-machine filters non-potable water from local wells into clean, potable water.

"It's more hygienic, less time-consuming and there's a constant supply of potable water on hand," said Sannella of how the water situation has improved.

Water purification is a multi-step process to filter out contaminants such as dirt and waste. The finished product goes to the base

dining and shower facilities.

The ROWPU can purify about 10,000 gallons of water per day. The base requires about 1,500 gallons per day for everyday activities.

"We use a lot of water, especially bottled water. This is going to help boost our supply," said Cpl. Dustin Young, HHC, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, assistant contractor liaison. "It's a lot more convenient and practical for us to have potable water here on hand, instead of waiting for jingle trucks from Kandahar to resupply us."

Members of the water purification team see an even greater advantage for the Soldiers.

"It's improving the quality of life for our Soldiers," said Sgt. Michael Konetsky, Supply and Service Platoon, Headquarters and Company A, 325th FSB, maintenance NCO.

"They can get showers with the purified water instead of well water. When they're out on their missions, this is something they can look forward to when they return to their camp. It's another way we can help build the base up."

The team operates 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week, to provide potable water for the entire firebase.

"The work that we're doing is extremely important," said Washington. "Troops need water to clean their clothes, equipment, themselves and to function. Our mission is to provide them the best quality available."

## Dari/Pashto phrase of the week



## Afghan cultural tidbit

### Dari

#### **Can I help you?**

*Maun maytawanam shoomara  
koomak kunum  
(Mawn may-tah-wah-nahm shoo-  
mah-rah koo-mahk kun-um)*

### Pashto

#### **Can I help you?**

*Zu cowaiaishum ta ta kumaq  
wacoum  
(Zuh cow-al-ish-um tah tah kum-  
ack wah-coum)*

**Afghans traditionally use only a first name. Afghan male first names are frequently Arabic names, reflecting Islamic values. For example, any male name starting with Abdul- is an Arabic construction with the last word being one of the names for God. Afghan girls are usually given traditional Arabic or Persian feminine names.**



## Airmen keep 'Warthog' payloads stocked

Story by Air Force  
Staff Sgt. Jennifer Lindsey  
455th Air Expeditionary Wing

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — Building up flares and loading 30 mm rounds and guided bombs is all in a day's work for ammunition troops at Bagram Airfield who are responsible for ensuring close air support is ready for ground troops.

Airmen of the 455th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Ammunition Unit keep the munitions supply lines flowing.

"Ammo" troops work around the clock to keep the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing's A-10 Thunderbolt II "Warthogs" stocked with the powerful payload that convinces insurgents to think twice about attacking Coalition personnel.

Working real-world missions with about half of the manning ammo units typically function with at home station, means that ammo troops must work twice as hard and complete tasks usually given to higher ranking technicians.

"Every person here counts for two people, and each of us must think ahead to maintain a clean safety record and stay ahead of demands," said Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Patrick Adams, unit superintendent.

Most of the Airmen find it easy to stay safe when there's such an important task at hand.



Photos by Air Force Capt. Catie Hague

"What makes being deployed here special, is that there's a high sense of purpose," said Air Force Tech. Sgt. David Hamilton, conventional munitions crew member.

"Back at home, Airmen are assigned to specific shops. But here, troops experience all aspects of the job," he said. "We also have a higher sense of purpose. At home, we practice doing what we actually execute as part of the daily mission here."

Accuracy is the highest calling for ammo units. Maintaining 100 percent accountability of all munitions isn't optional — it's

**Above:** Air Force Senior Airman Jennifer Connor, 455th Expeditionary Maintenance Group, hooks up an electrical testing unit to the travel pod. This unit verifies on the ground that the infrared flares will fire as directed once in the air. The maintenance group plays an important role in keeping aircraft mission ready.

**Left:** Air Force Senior Airman Oscar Mejia, 455th EMG weapons loader, wires a GBU-12 bomb while it hangs from an A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft before a mission.

mandatory.

Following instructions down to the smallest detail is one step in minimizing collateral damage when pilots pull the trigger.

On a flight in support of ground troops, more than 800 30 mm rounds and two laser-guided bombs were fired, destroying a hillside bunker and enemy forces that had earlier ambushed a U.S. troop convoy. Both bombs landed accurately on the laser designated target site.

"We check and recheck every munition to ensure that it will land on target," said Hamilton.

"When we see an A-10 return without its bombs, it's pretty cool, because we know it was used for a good purpose," he said.

"(My job) isn't glamorous, but it's important. Without ammo, Bagram would just be an airport."



# Fire safety important to all service members

## Safeguarding the Coalition

Story by Sgt. Frank Magni  
17th Public Affairs Detachment

AFGHANISTAN — Where Coalition members in Afghanistan sleep, eat and work differs greatly than that of their home base. Along with the many adjustments people must make to adapt to the new living conditions while deployed, one of the most important is an increased emphasis on fire safety.

For many throughout Operation Enduring Freedom, closely positioned tents and temporary plywood structures are the norm for living and working areas.

With the close proximity and combustibility of building materials, fire safety should be always on the mind of every person here, said Ken Newman, Bagram Airfield fire chief.

"The hazards of the living conditions require everybody to be diligent in preventing fires," said Newman. "Over

here, we are living in combustible buildings with battery powered smoke detectors. Back at home station, many buildings are equipped with sprinklers and are made from materials that won't burn."

The living quarters here don't always afford the same safety, and in some ways are more dangerous due to their close proximity to other structures.

"Any fire has the potential to spread rapidly, because there is only a small distance between tents and B-huts on fire bases," said Newman.

The collocation of quarters isn't the only

danger though.

Fire prevention also becomes more important when Coalition members try different methods to stay warm when the cold weather sets in.

"World-wide, the winter months are more prevalent months for fires," said Newman.

For those serving in Afghanistan, one of the most dangerous items is space heaters.

Coming in many shapes, sizes and powered by different sources, space heaters are greatly discouraged in many living environments, he said.

Space heaters are especially hazardous in

Responsibility for items like smoke detectors and fire extinguishers relies heavily on individuals at the unit level, said Newman.

"Smoke detectors will save lives, but that is only when they have working batteries," he said.

Staff Sgt. Jessica Reich, Shindand Fire Department noncommissioned officer in charge, takes fire prevention very seriously.

Maintaining a strict regimen of inspections and assisting unit fire marshals is one of the most important aspects of her job.

On a forward base like Shindand Airfield, fire hazards are a constant, but

many people neglect fire safety because the environment is different than a more built up base, said Reich.

To combat the hazards in her area, she conducts regular training to remind people they have a commitment to everyone when it comes to fire prevention.

"It isn't intentional, the mission diverts many people's attention," said Reich. "Just by reminding units about procedures, action always takes place very fast. It's not something people always think about."

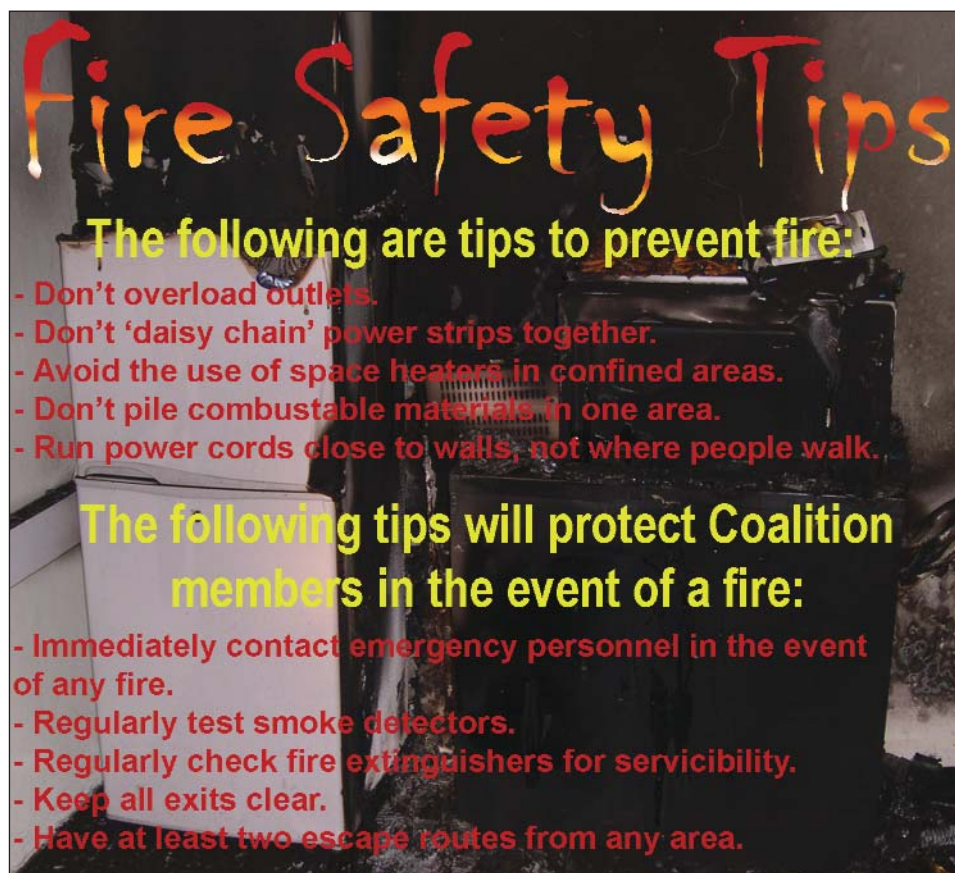
Training is also an important ele-

ment to Newman's job.

"We (conduct) training for fire extinguishers, electrical safety and fire procedures," said Newman. "Knowing what to do when a fire breaks, will save lives."

In addition to training and awareness, teamwork is the most important component to ensuring a fire won't endanger Coalition members.

"We are all living in close proximity to each other," said Newman. "Just because your area is squared away, doesn't mean you are safe. Everybody must make fire prevention a priority."



the smaller, more crowded living spaces.

"If you live in a seven-foot by seven-foot space, it is very difficult to keep items at a safe distance from the heaters," said Newman.

The excessive electricity most space heaters draw is also a concern in areas that have a limited number of outlets.

Space heaters are normally unnecessary if the living area's heating unit is in working order. If not, steps should be taken to have the unit fixed.

Personal accountability of equipment for fire prevention is also very important.

# U.S., Afghan police join forces on checkpoints

Story and photos by  
Sgt. Jennifer S. Emmons  
17th Public Affairs Detachment

GHAZNI PROVINCE, Afghanistan — Vehicles lined the street at a checkpoint outside Ghazni city as Afghan National Police officers checked each vehicle for possible threats to the people of the area.

“We are trying to make the city safe,” said Abdul Gharfar, an ANP officer operating the checkpoint. “We are checking all the vehicles to make sure there are no explosives or anything that would be harmful to the people.”

Ensuring the area remains safe is the police officer’s primary concern in this city in central Afghanistan.

“We want to take care of all the people in Ghazni,” said Ghulam Rabbani, checkpoint commander.

By checking each vehicle and person as they enter the city, everyone is safer, he said.

“We don’t want the Taliban or al-Qaida to try to hurt the people in our city,” he added. “We are here to help the people.”

Soldiers from the 25th Military Police Company visit each checkpoint several times a day to assist the ANP in any



**Staff Sgt. Stephan Mudge, 25th MP Co., helps the Afghan National Police search for contraband at a checkpoint in Ghazni province.**

way they can.

“We are checking on the checkpoints the Afghan police have set up around Ghazni,” said Spc. David Greer, 25th MP Co. “We are making sure they are manned appropriately and all proper procedures are being followed.”

When they arrived at the first checkpoint, a large bus filled with passengers pulled up. Staff Sgt. Stephan Mudge from the 25th MP Co. helped search them.

“We are here to make sure the police have everything they need,” he said.

“During the inauguration of President (Hamid) Karzai, we had many checkpoints,” said Rabbani. “The Coalition really helped us. We appreciate the Coalition forces helping us be able to protect the people better.”

The Soldiers have worked closely with the ANP to boost security over the past few months.

“When we first started working with them, they really didn’t know much about police work,” said Russell. “We’ve taught them a lot, and they have better control of their own country now.”

The MPs have noted amazing improvement in the policemen’s abilities in the past few months.

“From where they were to where they are now, it’s been an amazing progress,” said Russell. “They are doing a great job.”

“They’re being proficient and expedient. They’re doing thorough searches and are keeping the traffic moving,” he added.

The training of the ANP has been a large part of these Soldiers’ mission in Afghanistan.

“We trained the police in many of our security procedures,” said Greer. “We are in the fine-tuning phase of the training. They do a good job. We just show them little things they can do to improve.”

The Soldiers know where to draw the line between teaching and taking control.

“These are Afghan checkpoints,” said Pfc. Carol Russell, 25th MP Co. “It’s not us running them. This is the Afghan police taking care of the Afghan people – and the locals see that.”

Most Afghans see other locals in roles of responsibility and appreciate it, but anti-Coalition militants see whoever is in charge, as well as the people, as a target.

“They want to interrupt the Coalition and Afghan efforts for peace in this country,” said Greer. “Having these checkpoints is one way the police are providing security for the people of Afghanistan.”



**Mudge (right) and another MP search a vehicle at an ANP checkpoint near Ghazni city.**



## Interpreter: Linguists 'lifeblood' of Marine operations

*continued from Page 7*

than ever on anti-Coalition militants

"They're our lifeblood for communicating with local nationals and our Afghan Security Forces," said 2nd Lt. Roy Bechtold, Co. I, 3rd Bn., 3rd Marines, platoon commander.

"They'll fight with us to the death, and they're extremely protective of the Marines," he said.

Wadeer and his fellow

interpreters are extremely loyal to the Marines they often find themselves fighting alongside.

"They are good people," said Wadeer, breaking into an easy smile. "They treat us as equals, like we're the same because we fight together."

The interpreters said they are happy to see the new peace and stability that has been a direct result of the Coalition involvement in Afghanistan.

"I think we as Afghans are

all happier now," explained Wadeer. "The most important thing is security.

"There used to be these local commanders and no one had freedom," he continued.

"Now we live equal. Now there is a chance for us to live free and have a free Afghanistan."

Wadeer plans on returning to the medical field one day. But, for now, he feels his place is with the ASF and the Marines of America's

Battalion, fighting for his country.

"I think it's necessary for the Marines to stay here," he said. "The situation is still critical."

While the ANA is steadily growing toward its end strength of 70,000, there is still a need for a Coalition force in Afghanistan.

"The Marines help us to make our government more powerful so that we can take care of the terrorists ourselves," said Wadeer.

## Kiowa: Crew chiefs, mechanics help Kiowas succeed

*continued from Page 8*

"Five to 30 pounds of weight can be a life saver," said Emmer.

Strict maintenance regimens kept the Kiowas mission ready.

"I knew coming over here there would be a lot of work," said Pfc. Pablo Zuniga-Ortiz, Trp. B, 3rd Sqdn., 4th Cav. Rgt., crew chief. "(But) I knew if we just kept maintaining the Kiowas they would keep on flying."

The Kiowas require two to three times the maintenance here than they did back in their home state of Hawaii, because of the higher operational tempo and austere conditions. But this maintenance is done in a

condensed period, said Zuniga-Ortiz.

"If something breaks, we don't let it wait overnight here," he said. "Rain or shine, we work until it is fixed.

For the crews who work on the Kiowas, the success they have achieved is no surprise to them. The approach they took when they deployed in support Operation Enduring Freedom was a resolute view that their aircraft will fly no matter what.

"Failure was not an option for us," said Emmer. "We were going to do whatever we had to do to make these aircraft fly."



Sgt. Frank Magni

**Spc. Run Prach, Trp. B, 3rd Sqdn., 4th Cav. Rgt., secures a service panel in place on an OH-58D Kiowa Warrior during a scheduled PMCS.**

### Letters to the Editor

The *Freedom Watch* would like to publish your opinions on topics of importance and interest to those serving in OEF.

Please send your thoughts in letter form to the editor. All letters e-mailed must include full name, unit, address and, when possible, telephone number. We will not print anonymous letters. Please limit all letters to 200 words or less.

We reserve the right to edit letters for length, clarity and decorum.

Please avoid implying criticism of U.S. or DoD policies and programs, advocating or disputing specific political, diplomatic or legislative matters, or implying criticism of host nation or host nation sensitivities.

Please send your letters to: [stumpc@baf.afgn.army.mil](mailto:stumpc@baf.afgn.army.mil)

We look forward to hearing from you!

### OEF "Values" Essay Contest

Personnel in Afghanistan are invited to participate in the Operation Enduring Freedom bi-monthly "Values" Essay Contest sponsored by CJTF-76.

The current value is "**Personal Courage**."

#### Rules

- ☐ Essays should include the definition of the featured value and your own experience(s) that reinforce this value
- ☐ Essays will be at least one and no more than two pages (typed/neatly printed and double-spaced)
- ☐ Please include a cover page with Title, Author's Name, Supervisor's Name, Unit/Organization, Phone Number and e-mail address if available
- ☐ Do not put name directly on essay
- ☐ Submit essays to EO Adviser nearest your location, via e-mail or hard copy by **Feb. 10.**

The winning essay writer will receive a CJTF-76 Commanding General's Certificate of Achievement and other prizes to be announced. The essay will also be published in a future issue of the *Freedom Watch*, and in the bi-monthly EO Update.

EO is also looking for E-7s and above to help review essay submissions and select the winning essay.

Call the Bagram EO Senior Adviser at DSN 318-231-3021 for more information.

# ***Freedom Watch***

**February 6, 2005**



# **Scouts out**

Spc. David Huntington, Trp. A, 3rd Sqdn., 4th Cav Rgt., scans the horizon in Herat province. Photo by Sgt. Frank Magni